

this one's for the lonely, the ones that seek and find

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by [hujwernoo](#)

Summary

The worst part, Klaus thinks, isn't the dying. Don't tell Ben, but he's kind of been apathetic towards that part for....a while now. Death and Klaus have a certain relationship that defies explanation, and while he'll always be afraid of the ghosts he can't actually remember ever being afraid of the part where he'd kick the bucket. Maybe it's part of his powers, maybe it's just him.

So it's not the dying. It's not the apocalypse, either, because Klaus is actually a little surprised that hadn't happened sooner, one way or another. It's not the fact that Five's disappearance jumped him straight into hell, or that Klaus is a ghost now, or that he is apparently stuck following his brother around like a discount Casper.

No, Klaus can deal with all of those things. Badly, but he can.

The worst part is that Five thinks he's alone, and Klaus can't tell him otherwise.

Notes

This is inspired by the lovely 'and they could never tear us apart' by slytherincosette.

See the end of the work for [more notes](#)

- Translation into Français available: [TRAD - this one's for the lonely, the ones that seek and find](#) by [Loclo4](#)

The worst part, Klaus thinks, isn't the dying. Don't tell Ben, but he's kind of been apathetic towards that part for....a while now. Death and Klaus have a certain relationship that defies explanation, and while he'll always be afraid of the ghosts he can't actually remember ever being afraid of the part where *he'd* kick the bucket. Maybe it's part of his powers, maybe it's just him.

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"I saw a can of condensed milk over that way," Klaus tells Five as he trundles off in the wrong direction. "No, *that* way. Ugh, you never could take criticism."

Klaus phases through a chunk of rubble. He understands now why Ben didn't like doing it. His chest *fizzes* for a moment, and he experiences the brief but extremely disorienting sensation of disincorporating and reforming in the space of a second, except he isn't actually corporeal to begin with and the analogy breaks down there because apparently English doesn't have words for certain aspects of physics it hasn't discovered yet. Five could probably discover them, but Five is not aware that Klaus exists on any plane of reality and thus can't put his freakishly huge brain to work figuring out the mechanics of ghost physics.

Klaus never thought he would ever *want* to be not-alone. He's never been alone in his life, dreamed about it for years, chased after it on an ever-cresting high, but now that he is the only thing he wants to do is talk to his brother.

"You should raid the corner store on Fourteenth," Klaus tells Five, walking at his side. Five pulls his sad little wagon of priceless junk behind him. "The owner kept, like, four dozen bottles of vodka behind the counter. The good stuff. *Goldmine*, right there."

It's been nearly two months since....since. Klaus has kept a running commentary the entire time, but Five's spirits are clearly starting to flag. Klaus has no idea what his scribbled equations mean, but he's pretty sure the general gist is that Five is stuck here for the long haul. He's watched Five try to send himself back dozens of times, and each time Five's fists fizzle out and he breaks all over again.

Klaus isn't sure there's anything left to break, anymore.

"Please find yourself something better-looking than that coat, at least. I know apocalypse chic is all the rage nowadays, you're a real trendsetter, but what about that scarf from last week? You couldn't have used something else to stop the bleeding? It was *silk!*" Klaus threw up his hands to emphasize the magnitude of Five's faux pas. It had hardly been a scratch, really.

Nothing worth throwing away such a lovely garment. Klaus had always believed very strongly in the importance of fashion.

“And also,” Klaus said, building up steam now. “I think you’ve got it backwards, baby bro. You’re supposed to take the clothing *off* the mannequin and *leave* it behind. Not that I don’t promote love in all its forms, and I support you in all your survival-related endeavors, but seriously, Five, what the fuck.”

Said mannequin lay on its side in the wagon, plastic face staring into the sky. Klaus eyed it warily. He was...*mostly* sure that Five’s ultimate plan to travel back in time to undo the apocalypse did not require a mannequin.

Mostly.

Being (apparently) alone in the apocalypse has sort of taken its toll on Five, Klaus can admit. Hell, it’s taken its toll on Klaus as well, but he’s been trying to focus on the person he actually has a chance of fixing. Saves so much more time that way.

A flicker in the corner of his vision has Klaus jerking his head up, but it’s just a scrap of fabric blowing by. He shudders and wraps insubstantial arms around himself. It doesn’t make him any warmer - he’s having a hard time remembering what warmth even is, nowadays, but whatever - but he can’t help it. He scans the horizon for movement, but there’s nothing.

It’s *eerie*. Klaus isn’t used to silence and stillness. It’s always crashing, shrieking sound and endlessly frenetic energy, either his own or the ghosts, sometimes both, sometimes so blurred together they’re one and the same. Klaus doesn’t remember the times everything must have been calm, when he stuffed too many pills or needles into himself and pulled some poor schmuck away from looking after hospital patients to restart some junkie’s heart. He doesn’t remember those times, and the way Ben described him, so quiet and lifeless, always sounded like it was someone else. Maybe that’s why he never really took Ben’s pleading seriously.

Ben. Klaus sighs with lungs he doesn’t have, aimlessly kicking at rocks and rubbish only for his foot to do that tingly-fizzy thing. He hopes Ben moved on to the Great Beyond, or wherever ghosts went after they decided to stop screeching at the world’s only true medium about their stupid petty problems. He hopes all his siblings moved on, but since he hasn’t seen the others for nearly half his life it’s Ben he’s most focused on.

It serves as a good distraction from jumping at shadows and scraps in the wind. Klaus honestly doesn’t know where all the ghosts have gone, but he can’t muster enough feeling to particularly care about them. All he’s concerned about is what their absence implies for Ben and, to a lesser extent, the rest of his siblings. If whatever caused the apocalypse caused every single ghost bar him to move on, then great! Hooray! Five probably can’t imagine this desolate hellscape getting any worse, but Klaus has had a lifetime of seeing what thousands upon thousands of mangled, screaming corpses can add to a place, and he has no desire to disillusion his brother.

If the apocalypse didn’t just wipe out the living, but the dead as well, then -

Well. It doesn’t matter in the long run. Five is going to fix it either way.

“Don’t forget to get more medical supplies,” Klaus comments idly to Five. “You can never have too many drugs. No one’s even here to stop you from taking the good ones.”

Five, unsurprisingly, doesn’t answer him, although he does detour to a little pharmacy they’d found three days back to pick over the shelves. Klaus doesn’t know why he doesn’t just take the whole shebang, but he suspects it might have something to do with the way Five is getting increasingly dependent on alcohol to stay hydrated. Pills and booze do not mix well, as Klaus knows on an intimate level.

They walk back to Five’s fort, which Klaus refuses to call anything else, mostly for the imagined reaction of Five to the name. It’s in what used to be a library, surprise, surprise. Five finally bowed to the inevitable and started constructing winter shelter a few days ago, and the proposed sketch hangs next to the entrance of what is, at the moment, an admittedly ramshackle dwelling. The walls are mostly made of books, with a few crates of food and other essentials scattered around. The wind whistles past the odd column that’s still standing.

“Home sweet home!” Klaus beams and spins around. “Better than most of mine over the past decade or so, that’s for sure. That wasn’t sarcasm, by the way, you have a lovely fort here,” he adds to Five, who is unpacking his spoils and failing to appreciate the sheer grandeur of his domicile. Granted, he came here directly from the big fancy mansion of their childhood, but anyone who calls that a home is either deluded or programmed to.

Five stops when he’s put away all the scavenged supplies. He sits down on a stack of quantum physics textbooks and stares at the sole remaining object in the wagon: the mannequin, still dressed in a slightly tattered but still stylish cream-colored blouse. Klaus can appreciate the aesthetic of the thing, but it’s weird to see Five *looking* at it like that. It’s the look Klaus remembers seeing many, many times before: teeth-gritting, vein-throbbing frustration that leads to things like enormous arguments with Reginald and Five storming off because he doesn’t like having human limits. Only this time it has an edge Klaus has never seen before, and it takes perhaps too long to realize that that edge is *desperation*.

“I’m going to call you Delores,” Five announces, apropos of nothing, and Klaus nearly jumps out of his skin because this is the first time Five has spoken in several days. Then he registers what Five said, and makes a noise that is a cross between an offended shriek and semi-hysterical laughter.

“*Delores*? Excuse me, she is clearly a Marilyn with that shirt, and why are you naming a mannequin, Five, have I not been providing you with enough entertainment? Am I being replaced with a lump of plastic?”

Klaus continues his one-sided criticism of Five’s choice of companion and choice in names and choices in general, like his terrible rationing and getting into alcohol early on and slacking on gathering materials for winter and being a stubborn ass with a god complex so huge he thought he could play with time travel and abandon his family for seventeen years so they all thought he was dead except he was actually stuck in literal hell on earth where Klaus couldn’t help him in the least and had to watch as he deteriorated so thoroughly that he started making up imaginary friends so he wouldn’t go *insane*.

Klaus finds that he can, actually, cry as a ghost.

“Delores,” Five nods. “It’s good to meet you.”

“Yeah,” Klaus chokes out, “Yeah, Delores, it’s nice to meet you. Welcome to the apocalypse.”

End Notes

I literally threw this out in a couple hours and now I'm sad. Cry with me.

I'm also on the fence as to whether I should continue this. Thoughts?

Works inspired by this one

[Restricted Work] by [Smiley5494](#)

[\[PODFIC\] this one's for the lonely, the ones that seek and find](#) by [where_thewind_blows](#)

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